REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are currently pending in the application.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge Applicants' claim for priority, as Applicants have complied with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 119.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,532,469 (Feldman).

Feldman provides for the time axis of documents and the granularity that defines the period of time from which all documents are considered to belong to a single group (see column 8, lines 45-48). This can be interpreted such that the time axis is used for classifying documents by time period.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 9-11 are patentable over the reference, as Feldman fails to disclose each and every element of the claims. For example, Feldman fails to disclose, "lay out objects indicative of the documents, along a time axis, based on the time information," as recited in independent claim 1, for example. That is, Feldman fails to disclose the feature of the present invention of detecting a before-and-after relation in time between documents and creating a display image where objects (indicative of the documents) are arranged on a time axis.

The Examiner alleged that Feldman discloses, "lay out objects indicative of the document, along a time axis, based on the time information," which is recited in claim 1. Assuming *arguendo* that Feldman discloses classifying objects based on time information, the classification in Feldman is performed for calculating the number of appearances of documents in which keywords appear, within a preset period of time. For example, table 50 of FIG. 3 shows statistical information. In accordance with this statistical information, the number of appearances within a time period specified on the slide bar (time axis) 130 is provided as illustrated in FIG. 6. With the processes, Feldman intends to show a trend of the characteristics of documents within a certain period of time, and does not visually display a before-and-after relation in time between documents (see FIGS. 4A and 4B).

In contrast, an objective of the present invention is to display a degree of relevancy between documents that do not have citation relationships or reference relationships. Therefore, a before-and-after relation between documents is detected and objects indicative of documents are displayed in time series as illustrated in the relation chart of FIG. 1, which allows a user to know relations between the documents in time series.

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In light of the foregoing, independent claims 1 and 9-11 are patentable over Feldman. As dependent claims 2-8 depend from independent claim 1, the dependent claims are patentable over the reference for at least the reasons presented for the independent claim.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.
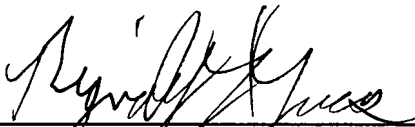
Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: 5-17-07   By: _____
                                      Reginald D. Lucas
                                      Registration No. 46,883

1201 New York Avenue, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501